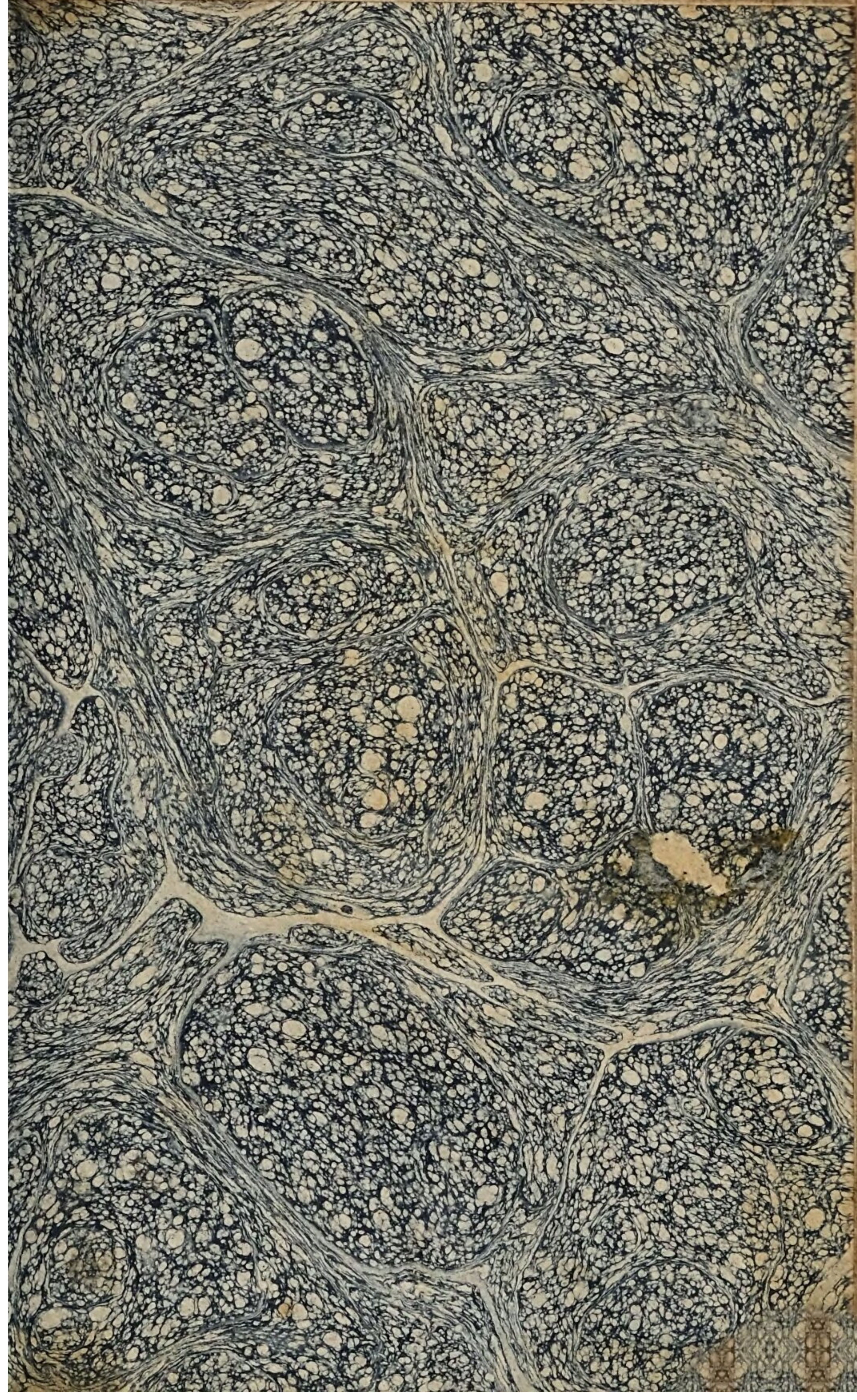


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T. W. Gordon.



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H I N T S
FOR
NON-COMMISSIONED
O F F I C E R S
ON
ACTUAL SERVICE.

COMPILED AND TRANSLATED
By COLONEL SONTAG.

L O N D O N :

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CHAPTER I.

Of the Advanced Posts.

QUERY 1. What is an advanced post?

Answer. By an advanced post is generally meant a corps or detachment stationed in front of an army to guard it, and to prevent an enemy from advancing undiscovered. Light troops are generally employed on this service; but in this chapter, by advanced posts is only understood such guards or pickets as are posted by each advanced corps towards the enemy, in order that the greater part of such corps may remain quiet and undisturbed in their huts, tents, or quarters, while the advanced posts or pickets are vigilant and alert.

Q. 2. Is there a great responsibility attached to such guards?

A. Certainly, a non-commissioned officer who has the command of such post is under a very great responsibility, as by his negligence thousands of his comrades may lose their lives or liberty.

Q. 3. How often is such a guard relieved?

A. Generally, every 24 hours.

Q. 4. Is this guard relieved, as guards are in general in time of peace, about noon?

A. No; generally in the evening, but there are circumstances, such as being very near to the enemy, or in expectation of an attack, that render it advisable to relieve guards one hour before day-break; under such circumstances, however, the old guard does not march back to its quarters, but remains (to be so much stronger should the enemy attack the post) with the relieving guard, until an hour after day-break, and both guards continue under arms all the time.

Q. 5. What are the points a non commissioned officer must attend to, when he commands an advanced post or picket?

A. He must inspect minutely the arms of his men, see them properly loaded, that the priming is in good order, the flints properly placed and screwed tight, and the pieces firm and steady on the half-cock, that they may not go off accidentally, and wound some of the men or create unnecessary alarm.

Q. 6.

What is the duty of a picket?

Q. 6. What is to be observed relative to the road, which the non-commissioned officer is to pass to take up his position, or relieve the advanced post or picket?

A. He is to take notice of every part of the country to the right, left, and front, as far as his view may extend, that he may know by day and night how to effect his retreat with the greatest safety, should he be compelled to it by a superior enemy.

Q. 7. How is a post to be occupied by infantry?

A. The men should be posted, if possible, in a covered place, behind an elevation, in a ditch, behind a hedge, mud wall, or in a coppice; should the country be perfectly level and no cover, a few trees should be cut down and dragged to the spot to form a covering, by which the post can be better defended.

Q. 8. In what manner is an advanced post or picket to be placed in front of a village?

A. In the gardens, behind the hedges, on both sides of the roads by which the enemy must advance, the road is to be closed up with waggons placed across it, and of which the wheels towards the post are taken off; ploughs, harrows, &c.

may be put likewise upon the road, by which the enemy will be retarded in his advance, and an opportunity will be given to annoy him much by the cross fire from both sides of the road.

Q. 9. Are single or double centinels placed out ?

A. Two centinels are always to be posted, that one may run to the guard and acquaint the commander of what has been seen.

Q. 10. In what manner, and at what distance are the centinels to be placed.

A. About three hundred paces, and they should be placed in such a manner, if possible, as to be hid, but that they nevertheless can see at a great distance, so that no cavalry of the enemy can dash upon them and cut them down, or make them prisoners.

Q. 11. The centinels being posted upon roads not going straight, but in a curve, having mud or stone walls, or hedges on both sides, or placed in a thick wood, by which they are prevented from seeing at a great distance, what is to be done in such a case to post them with advantage and some sort of security ?

A. The

A. The centinels may be covered by waggons or trees felled ; and openings should be made on both sides in the walls or hedges, that they can see to the right and left ; in a wood some trees should be cut down to procure them a more extended view.

Q. 12. What is the conduct the centinels are to observe, should they perceive the enemy at a distance of 6 or 800 paces ?

A. One of the two centinels fires, and then runs to the guard to report what he has seen.

Q. 13. What has the other centinel to observe in the meantime ?

A. He must be very attentive to all the motions of the enemy, and on his advancing nearer, he fires also, and runs back to report what he has observed.

Q. 14. What is further to be done by the centinels should the enemy advance with caution and slowly ?

A. They load again and return to their post.

Q. 15. What are the centinels to do should the enemy advance with celerity?

A. They must fire and retreat to their picket.

Q. 16. Of what use is it to fire at 6 or 800 paces, when a rifle carries only at such a distance with an elevation, and when it is almost impossible to hit with a firelock?

A. By firing, an alarm is given, by which means the commander of the advanced post or picket is warned in time that the enemy is advancing, and on what point.

Q. 17. What disadvantage might ensue should the centinels wait until the enemy had advanced within 2 or 300 paces, when by firing they might be able to kill or wound some men?

A. The enemy would come almost in the same time with the centinels upon the picket, by which means it would not be prepared to resist, and the post might be lost.

Q. 18. In what manner are the centinels to conduct themselves at night on the approach of the enemy?

A. When

A. When they know that no patrole or party of their own army is out, they must call out twice, *who comes there?* no satisfactory answer being received, they cock their pieces, fire, and fall back towards the picket.

Q. 19. Are they to fire both or one after the other?

A. No; one fires first, whilst the other observes if on the fire of his comrade any thing is advancing, upon which he acts in the same manner, fires, and retreats.

Q. 20. How are the centinels to conduct themselves when nobody advances, and when they find they have been mistaken, as it may happen principally in a coppice or wood, when a piece of game starts up, or some cattle or horses come upon them; which error may easily take place as the centinels are in constant expectation that an enemy will fall upon them?

A. The centinels must not, after having fired, run at once to the picket, but after having retreated fifty or sixty paces they must halt, observe whether they are followed, and if not, they must

load again and return to the place they have been posted at.

Q. 21. In what case are both the centinels to fire?

A. When they are certain that a party of men advances briskly upon them, which is generally the case when the enemy wants to surprise a post or make the centinels prisoners.

Q. 22. Should the firelocks miss fire, which may often happen in rainy or stormy weather, what are the centinels to do in such a case?

A. They are to run back, and call out as loud as possible *to arms, to arms*.

Q. 23. As in war it happens frequently that deserters are coming over, and that it would be wrong in the centinels to fire and kill or wound such men, in what manner are the centinels to conduct themselves?

A. On men advancing, and upon their being challenged declaring themselves deserters, a centinel should be very cautious and distrustful, (as it is frequently done to surprise the centinels and picket) and should call out *halt, or I fire*.

Q. 24.

Q. 24. What are the centinels to do should the deserters still advance?

A. *Fire*, and act as has been stated before.

Q. 25. How are the centinels to act, if the deserters halt upon their being told to do so?

A. One of the centinels goes to the commander of the picket to report that deserters are arrived; whilst he is absent the other centinel remains with his cocked firelock, and calls out to the deserters to stand still and wait.

Q. 26. What measures are to be taken by the commander of the picket?

A. He orders his men under arms, and directs a corporal, and some men, to advance and receive the deserters with caution, and to conduct them to the picket.

Q. 27. If the deserters are armed, what is to be done?

A. They must be desired to lay down their arms.

Q. 28. At what time is it required that double precautions should be taken?

A. When the deserters are in great number.

Q. 29. What is the conduct of the commander of the picket to be in such case?

A. He makes them halt at some distance, reports it to the main post, from whence a detachment is sent to conduct them further.

Q. 30. Is it allowed to the centinels to walk about and talk together?

A. No: they must stand still and look constantly about, particularly at night, they must be very attentive, listen, and stoop frequently to try if they can perceive any thing at a distance.

Q. 31. In what manner are the centinels to conduct themselves should they hear at a distance the noise of a waggon or waggons, &c.?

A. They must lie down alternately upon the ground, and listen from whence or towards which side the noise proceeds, and whether it approaches or recedes.

Q. 32. What are they to do when they have made a certain discovery?

A. One goes to the commander of the picket, and reports what has been observed.

Q. 33.

Q. 33. What is the Commander to do upon receiving such a report?

A. He is to hurry to the place to convince himself, and should he find the statement correct he reports it to the next post in his rear.

Q. 34. Why should he report it further?

A. Because by such movements it is probable that the enemy is advancing or retreating, or at least changing his encampment or position.

Q. 35. What are the centinels to do should they observe an uncommon barking of dogs in the villages or farm houses in the vicinity?

A. They are to report this also.

Q. 36. Why?

A. As it is to be supposed that where the dogs bark strangers are near.

Q. 37. What is the commander of the picket to do in such case?

A. He is to report it further.

Q. 38. What is to be done should cannon shots

or firing be heard either near or at a distance?

A. It should be reported, as the shots being on the flanks it is a proof that the enemy has made an attack or has surprised our line.

Q. 39. What is a centinel to do in heavy rain, high wind, or a storm of snow?

A. He should front towards the enemy, he must not draw his hat over his eyes, nor stoop with his head to screen himself from the wind or snow storm, but should redouble his attention to observe what is going on, for in stormy or bad weather a surprise is often executed, as the enemy confides in the inattention of the centinels, who frequently are of opinion that in such bad weather the enemy will not attempt any thing, whereas it is the most eligible and favourable opportunity for him to attempt a surprise.

Q. 40. In what manner are the reports to be made?

A. The reports must be made in the clearest manner; the men should not be in a hurry when making the same, as by that means the danger is over-

over-rated. The report may be such as the following, viz. *Enemy's hussars or cavalry* are seen at the distance of 800 or 1000 paces; behind them is observed the glittering of bayonets, and at a greater distance a cloud of dust is seen.

Q. 41. What bad effects may arise from a report made in a frightened manner?

A. The soldiers may become uneasy, particularly the timid men, of whom there are always some.

Q. 42. What is to be further observed by the centinels?

A. If it is cavalry or infantry that is advancing; if they have cannons; if they advance in columns, detachments, or in line.

Q. 43. Are the men on an advanced guard to be permitted to quit their firelocks and sit round the fire?

A. Yes, but only by day, and when the advanced guard is so situated that the Commander can see his centinels and what passes at a distance.

Q. 44. In what circumstance is the advanced guard

guard or picket to remain under arms and not quit their firelocks?

A. When the enemy is near, and the country so situated that neither centinels nor guard can see at a great distance.

Q. 45. What is to be done by night?

A. The men may sit round the fire at night, particularly in cold and damp weather, but the firelocks must be kept between their legs; to be ready on hearing the report of a musket from the centinels.

Q. 46. At what time is the guard to be constantly under arms and have no fire?

A. At the time that the enemy is so near that the centinels of both sides are in view, keeping up a fire in such circumstances would be a guide to the enemy to advance upon the post.

Q. 47. But supposing the weather to be so severe that it is impossible to be without fire, and to be obliged to permit the men in turn to go and warm themselves, at which side of the fire is the party to be placed in case of an attack?

A. At

A. At some distance behind the fire, as it blinds the enemy and enables us to see him.

Q. 48. In what manner is the commander to conduct himself being posted near the enemy and in expectation to be attacked?

A. He must point out to each man the place he is to be stationed should the enemy attack, and this is to be repeated each time after the relief is returned.

Q. 49. In what manner should he take his position?

A. In a half circle, by which means his two flanks are covered.

Q. 50. Are the centinels placed constantly on the same spot as is practised in time of peace?

A. No: they are constantly changed, as it is useful that the men should get conversant with the ground, and that they should not know beforehand where they will be posted.

Q. 51. What is to be done when the enemy attacks in greater force, and that the guard or picket is not supported?

A. The

A. The commander retreats under a constant firing to one of the flanks of the corps from which he has been detached, by which means he may receive support from the corps when he comes near it, which support would be prevented should he retreat straight upon it.

Q. 52. Are there no posts or situation in which a good commander is to defend himself to the last man?

A. Yes: some circumstances of that kind do occur, for example, in defending a narrow pass or defile, defending a bridge or ford, defending or opposing a landing, having received the order to do so to the last extremity, or until supported.

N. B. This is particularly to be observed in defending or opposing a landing; the British coast in general being such that a few men judiciously placed and acting with resolution may detain a large body of the enemy for some time; and even after he has landed, on perseverance of a few minutes longer may perhaps depend the total defeat or destruction of the enemy; and on the contrary the want of spirit or resolution of the advanced guards or pickets may be the cause of the enemy making his

his landing good. Experience has taught that a body of troops on landing are always in some sort of disorder at first, and the spirited conduct of a few cool and determined individuals will increase the same to an astonishing degree. A picket may venture to attack a body of three or four times its number with the bayonet, after giving them a volley levelled with coolness and judgment, at the instant they have landed : and the British soldiers must not lose sight of the advantage they will have over an enemy conducted to the shore by inexperienced seamen, and over sea sick and fatigued soldiers not accustomed to the sea, nor to a disembarkation, nor to a spirited opposition.

Q. 53. But should no support arrive ?

A. This should not operate in the least; enough the order has been given to defend to the last; if this resolution is firmly taken and executed, it generally turns out to the advantage and honor of the defenders of the post.

Q. 54. What is to be observed in defending a bridge or a ford ?

A. Should the bridge be of timber, the planks should be taken off, and placed on our side, laying them upon one another with the edge toward the enemy, which will form a good breast work to fire over; all boats, &c. to be brought and secured on our side. Should the bridge be of stone, it must be closed up in the same manner as directed in Answer to Query 8 of this chapter. If the ford is passable either on foot or horseback, ploughs and harrows should be collected and placed in the same.

Q. 55. In what manner is the commanding non-commissioned officer to place his guard or picket?

A. He is to place his guard, if possible, under some cover, at the distance of 100, 150, or 200 paces from the bridge or ford, to be able to defend the same by his fire; in such case, if the men keep themselves cool and collected, each shot ought to kill or wound, and must cost the enemy a number of men before he can force the passage.

Q. 56. Are centinels sufficient for the security of an advanced guard?

A. No.

Q. 57.

Q. 57. What means are still necessary to guard against a sudden attack of an enemy?

A. Frequent patrolling.

Q. 58. Of what strength may a patrol be, which is detached from an advanced guard or picket commanded by a non-commissioned officer and twelve or sixteen men?

A. Of a corporal and two privates, and sometimes of a corporal and one private.

Q. 59. How often are they to be sent out?

A. When a patrol returns, a new one is sent out.

Q. 61. Which road or direction is to be taken by the patrols?

A. Granting that the advanced post has two sentinels who are able to observe and guard a line of 200 paces, the first patrol goes by the right to the next picket, and visits the chain of sentinels to the next picket to the left; the second patrol goes out by the left and returns by the right in the same manner as was done by the first patrol, and so on alternately.

Q. 61. In what manner are they to go, and what have they to observe ?

A. They go very slow, listen and halt frequently, if they can hear or see any thing strange, and observe if the centinels are alert and on their guard.

Q. 62. What is the duty of the corporal of the patrol on perceiving something strange on the line or chain between the centinels ?

A. He orders one of his men to creep forwards, and if an enemy to fire ; for the remainder his conduct is to be similar to that of the centinels as stated already in this chapter.

Q. 63. Independent of those patrols chiefly intended to visit and inspect the line and chain of centinels, are no other patrols to be sent out ?

A. Between each relief an intelligent corporal with one or two privates should be sent in front of the centinels several hundred paces, or on the road by which the enemy may advance, who halts from time to time and listens, and on perceiving nothing returns.

N. B. The advancing and retreating of such
patrole

patrole must be done with a great deal of caution.

Q. 64. What is the conduct of such a patrolle on perceiving anything ?

A. One of them advances with caution towards what is perceived, whilst the others are very attentive to what may happen to the man so detached.

Q. 65. What are they to do on finding it is an enemy ?

A. They are to fire, and should their firelocks miss fire, call out loud, and further conduct themselves as directed for the centinels No. 19, 20, and 21.

Q. 66. What should be the conduct of a patrolle in foggy weather ?

A. It must advance with the same caution as a night patrolle; the patroles must be very much on their guard, as in a fog little or nothing can be noticed at a distance.

Q. 68. Our patroles having passed the centinels towards the enemy, in what manner are they to be distinguished on their return ?

A. Those

A. Those patrols going from centinel to centinel go by their flanks, but those who are to advance in front mention this to the centinels on going out.

Q. 68. Are they to be challenged by calling out twice *Who comes there?*

A. No; they are challenged by one *Who comes there?* given in a very low voice, which is answered by the patrol in the same tone, and the name of the corporal is mentioned, and the counterfign given.

Q. 69. Why is this done in a low voice?

A. As it may be possible that some single soldier of the enemy or a spy may have crept forwards, if the counterfign was given in a loud voice it might be discovered by him.

Q. 70. In what manner is such patrol to be examined?

A. The centinel calls *Who is there?* and cocks his piece.

The corporal answers, *Patrole.*

The centinel replies, What is the strength of the patrol, and who commands it?

Answer

Answer of the Corporal.—The corporal N. N. and one or two privates.

The Centinel.—Halt patrole, advance one man only.

Q. 71. What is done then ?

A. The corporal advances, the centinel holding the cock of his firelock with his thumb, presents his bayonet to the breast of the corporal, and receives in that position the counterfign; the centinel finding every thing right permits the patrole to pass.

Q. 72. What is to be the conduct of the centinels when a field officer or a general visits the post ?

A. In the same manner, as with the patrole, he demands the counterfign, and does not suffer any one to come near him.

Q. 73. What is to be done on the return of the patrole to the picket or the advanced guard ?

A. The patrole is again examined.

Q. 74. What is further to be done by the picket ?

A. It must get under arms.

Q. 75.

Q. 75. Why ?

A. As it is possible that the patrol has been taken or killed by the enemy without noise, and that the enemy taking advantage of this circumstance, may attempt to surprise the post or picket.

Q. 76. Is the countersign in the field the same as in time of peace, being one word ?

A. The countersign in an army is generally the name of a place or of a man ; but in the very advanced post an additional countersign is used to know the patrols. Sometimes a number or a low cough which is repeated two or three times, or some knock upon the rifle or firelock or cartridge box, which are recollected much better by the centinels, than foreign names they are not accustomed to.

Q. 77. What is the duty of an officer or non-commissioned officer if a man deserts to the enemy from his post ?

A. He must alter the countersign immediately, and report it not only to the corps he has been detached from, but also to the pickets placed to his right and left, that they may act accordingly.

Q. 78.

Q. 78. Why is this done ?

A. The enemy knowing the counter-sign may attempt and effect a surprise, but if the counter-sign is altered the knowledge is of no use to him.

Q. 79. Are the advanced guards to turn out by day under arms ; general officers visiting the same ?

A. By no means ;—every body remains quiet ; the officer or non-commissioned officer meets him and receives his commands.

Q. 80. Do the centries present arms ?

A. No.

Q. 81. Why ?

A. Because their arms are loaded, and the enemy might perceive that an officer of rank is at the advanced post, and a party of the enemy who may be hid near the centinels might dash on and make the general prisoner.

The guard does not turn out but remains quiet, because as they have been alert the whole night, the men who are then asleep should not be disturbed.

Q. 82. I suppose the men on an advanced post are to be very quiet?

A. Yes. Every thing is to be done in the quietest manner, no firing or noise is to be allowed; by night nothing should be spoken but in a low voice.

Q. 83. Are the centinels allowed to smoke.

A. No; as by night the fire in a pipe may be seen at a great distance, even the smoke of the tobacco may be smelt.

Q. 84. In a country like Great Britain is there any other advanced guard?

A. Yes; guards on the coast or beach.

Q. 85. What are they to attend to?

A. All their attention must be turned towards the sea: should they discover ships coming nearer *them* to the coast, this must be reported immediately.

Q. 86. How can this be done in the night?

A. At night no ships are likely to come near the coast; but should towards evening any ships be perceived at a distance, in that case every vigilance and attention should take place, as the enemy

my may land a few men in boats to make prisoners and gain intelligence of what passes on the coast.

Q. 87. An enemy's fleet or squadron being observed at anchor at a great distance, what is to be done then ?

A. In that case every vigilance and activity should take place, as the enemy may intend to land, or to send boats to sound and reconnoitre the coast.

Q. 88. What is to be done if armed boats approach the shore ?

A. Report it immediately, and fire upon them so soon as they come within reach (about 300 paces from the shore).

Q. 89. Are patrols to be sent out ?

A. Constantly to the right and left upon the beach to the next posts ; the remainder to be done as stated before in this chapter.

Q. 90. It happens frequently that the enemy sends an officer with a trumpeter, and an officer with a flag in a boat, what is to be done in such case ?

A. If the commanding general will permit such officer to be received, instructions should be given to the sentinel not to fire; but the trumpeter having sounded, the sentinel desires them to halt, and also the officer in the boat coming with a flag, and reports it to his guard, who reports it further.

Q. 91. Is any thing more to be attended to in such case?

A. The sentinels must be cautioned not to enter into any kind of conversation with them, as it is probable that every means will be used to pump the sentinel.

CHAPTER II.

Of the Advanced Guard.

QUERY No. 1. What is an advanced guard ?

Answer. An advanced guard is a certain number of men marching at the head of a larger number.

Q. 2. For what purpose are they so employed ?

A. To take care that the enemy does not fall upon us unawares, and that the main body may have time to get ready to receive the enemy and to put itself in the best situation for defence.

Q. 3. At what distance is a non-commissioned officer detached in front with twelve or sixteen privates ?

A. About 100 or 150 paces.

Q. 4. Why at such a short distance ?

A. That he may be supported, or fall back with safety, should he fall in with an enemy suddenly.

Q. 5. In what manner are those men to be subdivided by the non-commissioned officer, and in what order are they to march?

A. He should detach two men at fifty paces in his front, and two men at the same distance on both his right and left flanks; the flanking parties on seeing any height near them should pass over the same, and not round the bottom, as by so doing they may see and observe at a greater distance.

Q. 6. How many men is the non-commissioned officer to keep with him?

A. Six men, if his party consists of twelve; and ten men, if sixteen in number.

Q. 7. What have the men, called skirmishers, (detached and marching in front and on the flanks) to observe?

A. They must be very attentive and look well about them, that the enemy may not fall upon them unawares; whenever they discover an enemy, though even at a very great distance, they must report it to the non-commissioned officer.

Q. 8. What is to be done by the non-commissioned officer?

A. He

A. He goes himself to that side where it has been reported to him that the enemy has been seen, and ascertains the truth of the report; finding it to be so, he is to send one man to report it to the officer who follows him.

N. B. It has happened frequently that a hedge has been taken for a line of troops, a drove of cattle or sheep for a body of men, carts for cannons, therefore great attention must be paid to prevent mistakes and consequently a false alarm.

Q. 9. In what manner is a defile or hollow road to be passed?

A. One of the two first or front skirmishers advances slowly and looks with care before him, particularly should a curve be in the defile or hollow road, which prevents seeing at a distance.

Q. 10. At what distance is the second skirmisher to follow the first?

A. At the distance of from 50 to 100 paces, but he must keep the distance in such manner that he can always see his comrade.

Q 11. Why ?

A. For should the first by his own negligence, or by an hidden enemy, be attacked and taken prisoner or killed, the second may have time to fall back and report it.

Q. 12. What is further to be done ?

A. Should the first man not discover an enemy the non-commissioned officer detaches two men more, but he remains himself with the remainder of his party before the entrance of the defile until those men have passed it, and that he has received the report that all is safe.

Q. 13. Why ?

A. That he may be able to retreat should the enemy have hid himself in the defile or before it.

Q. 14. How are the skirmishers to act after having passed the defile or hollow road ?

A. As soon as they have passed it they hurry to the most elevated spot near it and reconnoitre, after which one goes back and reports what has been seen.

Q. 15. What does the non-commissioned officer ?

A. He

A. He reports to the next detachment what has been reported to him, passes the defile with his men with celerity, and takes a post where he can see about him, and where he remains until he receives an order to continue his march.

Q. 16. In what manner are the skirmishers, who are detached on the right and left flank, to conduct themselves in passing a hollow way or defile?

A. They must try, if possible, to ascend the height and turn the defile, and cover the two advanced men going through the same; when these men have passed through, they must endeavour to discover them, and take a position in a line with them, look well about, and proceed as soon as they perceive that the non-commissioned officer is beginning to continue his march.

Q. 17. In what manner is a bridge to be passed?

A. The two men advanced in front, and those on the flanks, pass the bridge, take post on an elevated spot, look about them and remain.

Q. 18. But if on both sides of the bridge the water is to be passed, in what manner are the flank skirmishers to act?

A. They must try to pass the river, particularly if the opposite bank is more elevated and closed by hedges or bushes where an enemy may lie concealed.

Q. 19. How are the front skirmishers to act, when the country is so much enclosed with hedges, or high stone or mud walls, and the road with many angles, that it is impossible for them to see at a distance?

A. One of the two must, when he sees the angle or curve in the road, advance and look round the angle before the other follows, to prevent the enemy from falling upon them.

Q. 20. In what manner are the side skirmishers to act?

A. One of the two men must get over the mud or stone wall and look about, before the second follows, that both men may not be lost should an enemy be hid.

Q. 21. How are the flank skirmishers to act in a country covered with high hills?

A. They must gain, if possible, the summit of the hills on both sides of the road.

Q. 22.

Q. 22. How is the non-commissioned officer to act with his detachment upon the road through mountains, generally being a curved road?

A. He divides his men in parties of *two* and *two*.

Q. 23. Why?

A. In a narrow road through high hills, it is very easy for a resolute officer to hide himself behind them with twenty or thirty men, and by a sudden attack upon the head of the advanced guard, to throw a whole column into confusion.

Q. 24. In what manner are causeways in a boggy country, or a road through marshes, having on both sides broad ditches, passed?

A. With the same caution and in the same order as stated in No. 22; the non-commissioned officer dividing his men *two* and *two*.

Q. 25. What have the front skirmishers to do when they reach the end of a causeway in a bog, or some cross road in a marshy country?

A. They must post themselves forwards to the right and left, and look carefully about.

Q. 26. How is the non-commissioned officer to act after having passed the causeway, or road, through the bog or marsh ?

A. He is to keep his men divided two and two, and to post his detachment in a half circle about fifty paces from the causeway or road ; should he meet with cross roads, he occupies each in the same manner, and reports to the officer that he has taken post.

Q. 27. For what reasons is it necessary to act with such caution ?

A. Should the enemy be informed of our march, and in passing such grounds should those prudential measures be neglected, he may, by placing at the end of the causeway or road a few cannon which may be kept concealed, cause the greatest slaughter and confusion in a large body of men crowded together.

Q. 28. In what manner is a wood or forest to be passed ?

A. The whole advanced guard is to be divided *two and two* ; they are to keep from each other at the distance of from twenty to thirty or fifty paces, according to the thickness of the wood, and cross

cross it in that manner, keeping as much as possible in a line; those on both flanks are to keep rather a little back, by which means a sort of half circle is formed, and by which the flanks are covered.

Q. 29. In what manner is a village, a country seat, or large farm, to be passed?

A. The two first skirmishers advance towards the first building *one after the other*.

Q. 30. What is further to be done?

A. They remain halted before the first building or house at some distance, and call for some one to come out, of whom they enquire whether the enemy is near.

Q. 31. What is to be done when they do not get any intelligence of an enemy?

A. They go through the village with great precaution, make enquiries of every one they meet if the enemy has been seen, and pitch upon some spot through the village from which they can see at some distance; should, however, they get from an inhabitant any intelligence about an enemy, one of the two men must conduct the person to the non-commissioned officer to be questioned by him,

him, the other man remains waiting the return of his comrade.

Q. 32. What is the conduct of the flank skirmishers?

A. They go round the village, country seat, or farm, and remain halted at the outside of the same until they see their comrades coming out of the village, with whom they dress in line and look about.

Q. 33. The skirmishers who march in front and on the flanks being for the security, not only of the advanced guard but of the whole corps, and on a march for the security of the whole army, why is it not usual for them to fire on perceiving an enemy at a distance as is done by the centinels?

A. Should the enemy fall upon them suddenly, they must certainly fire immediately to warn the troops that the enemy is near, to enable them to receive and repulse his attack; otherwise they should not fire, but should hide themselves, not to be observed by him, whilst one creeps back and reports it to the non-commissioned officer of the advanced guard, who may settle some private signals

nals with the skirmishers when in fight; such as the following: he takes off his hat, stoops, and waves it once, should he perceive a few single men of the enemy; should they be in a body, and in number, he waves three or four times or more, according to the number he may discover.

The principal objection to the skirmishers of the advanced guard firing immediately when on a march, is, that the general who commands the corps intends, perhaps, to surprise the enemy, which is of course not known by him, and should, under such circumstances, the skirmishers fire, it would discover to the enemy that the army, or a body of troops is near.

Q. 34. In what manner should the firelocks or rifles be carried on this service, as if shouldered the brightness of the weapon will shew at a very great distance?

A. To be carried as in shooting game; the firelock or rifle under the left arm, the muzzle downwards and the bayonet taken off; the men of the advanced guard commanded by the non-commissioned officer, carry their arms in the same manner; the skirmishers even should take the feathers out of their hats or caps.

Q. 35.

Q. 35. What are the skirmishers to do if they meet with peasants or other people?

A. Should they find any in the fields, they must enquire after the enemy, and send them to the non-commissioned officer; the same must be done with those they meet on the road.

Q. 36. What does the non-commissioned officer do with those people?

A. He enquires respecting the enemy, and sends them to the commanding officer in his rear.

Q. 37. What is the conduct of the skirmishers meeting a single enemy or a patrol?

A. One reports it, or the signal is given as described in No. 33. upon which the non-commissioned officer makes his disposition, and hides his men to the right and left to make the patrol prisoners; but the non-commissioned officer must not neglect to report it immediately to the officer who follows him that he may be prepared and act accordingly; in short, every thing which is observed by the skirmishers should be reported, as by meeting a patrol it is more than probable that a body of the enemy is very near.

Q. 38.

Q. 38. What is the conduct of skirmishers by night, and in a very dark one?

A. The front and flank skirmishers must not march at a greater distance than that they may still see or hear the advanced guard marching; they must frequently stand still, listen, lie down on the ground, to endeavour to see if any person is near, or to hear a noise at a distance, as by night if the enemy is near, there is danger of falling into an ambuscade.

Q. 39. What are the skirmishers to do when they perceive men or hear a noise?

A. One creeps back and reports, whilst the other lays down and tries if he can discover any thing more.

Q. 40. What is the non-commissioned officer to do?

A. He sends the report to the officer, takes with him two of his most resolute men, creeps forward as near as possible to the spot, and examines with care himself.

Q. 41. What is to be done should they observe
a few

a few men advancing either on horseback or on foot ?

A. The skirmishers, the non-commissioned officer and his two men lay down on both sides of the road, and try to make those men prisoners, but this should be done if possible without noise, and without firing, as the enemy by that means may be informed of our approach, and should the night be very dark every precaution should be taken not to fall into an ambuscade.

Q. 42. On falling in during the night with a superior enemy what conduct is to be pursued ?

A. Attack them immediately with resolution : should the enemy however fall so suddenly upon the skirmisher that he cannot fire, in such case he must call out as loud as possible, An enemy ! that the commander may be informed of the enemy being near.

Q. 43. Should the enemy however be discovered in time by the skirmishers, what is the conduct of the non-commissioned officer to be in such a case ?

A. He reports it, and tries to get a position
with

with his men on the side of the road, and kneels down with his party to fire upon the enemy suddenly, by which he certainly will be thrown into some confusion and be stopped, by that means the troops following gain time, and take measures for defence; such as to throw themselves behind trees, into a ditch, behind a hedge, or stone, or mud wall, &c.

CHAPTER III.

Of the Flank Patroles.

QUERY No. 1. What is a flank patrole ?

Answer. A flank patrole is a number of men who, at a certain distance, march on the flanks of a large body, and by covering the same, prevent an enemy from suddenly attacking their flanks.

Q. 2. What is the distance the non-commissioned officer is to keep, being ordered for the flank patrole with 12 or 16 men ?

A. At the distance of 150 paces at least, if the country is open he may keep at the distance of 200 paces or farther.

Q. 3. Why is he to keep at so great a distance ?

A. If the flank patrole does not march at a good distance, he cannot be of great use in discovering the enemy and preventing a sudden attack upon the flank, which on a march is the most dangerous of all attacks.

Q. 4.

Q. 4. In what manner must the non-commissioned officer divide his men, and in what manner are they to march?

A. The non-commissioned officer being ordered to cover the right flank with 12 or 16 men keeps with him from 6 to 10, who are divided two and two at such distances as to cover the flank of the column; the front men must if possible keep the advanced guard in fight; the non-commissioned officer detaches a corporal and five men towards his right at 50 or 60 paces distance to cover his own right flank.

Q. 5. What are the men to do?

A. They are to act in the same manner as the skirmishers of the advanced guard, be constantly on the look out, gain all the high grounds, and search all covered spots in or behind which an enemy may lay concealed; as to what relates to villages, large farms, hollow roads, bridges, coppices or woods, they observe the same conduct as prescribed to the skirmishers of the advanced guard, as stated in No. 29. Chapter II. and act in the same manner towards people in the field or on the road as directed in No. 35.

Q. 6.

Q. 6. What is the conduct of the non-commissioned officer commanding the flank patrol on the left?

A. He must expect the enemy on his left, for which reason he takes the same precautions on his left as have been more minutely described for the right flank patrol.

Q. 7. What is the conduct of the flank patrols to be on meeting on their march lakes, impenetrable woods, bogs, marshes, and other impassable impediments?

A. They must not leave those impediments between them and the corps they have been detached from, but fall back nearer to the flank of that corps, as by going on the outside they may risque being cut off. But an attempt should be made by a few men to pass the bog, marsh, or wood; they should not put too much confidence in the information received from the country people, who making only use of the high roads or common foot paths are frequently not acquainted with such spots.

Q. 8. What is to be done on discovering an enemy either concealed or advancing upon our flank?

A. The

A. The flank skirmishers should fire instantly.

Q. 9. Why?

A. That the commander of the corps may be acquainted in time that he is in danger of being attacked on his flank.

Q. 10. What is the non-commissioned officer to do in such case?

A. He must, as directed to the advanced guard, look out with his men for an elevated or covered spot from which he may observe the enemy, and on his approach be able to defend himself.

Q. 11. How long is he to defend that spot?

A. Until he is obliged to retreat before too great a superiority.

Q. 12. The flank patrol being obliged to retreat, in what manner is it to take place?

A. They must not retreat straight upon the corps from which they have been detached, but they must divide themselves in two parties, open to the right and left, and retreat in that manner.

Q. 13. Why are the flank patrols not to retreat straight?

A. To

A. To enable the main body to defend itself by firing immediately; the patrol retreating straight upon their corps might also occasion confusion.

Q. 14. But suppose some cavalry of the enemy come unaware upon the flank patrol of infantry, how are they to conduct themselves?

A. The men are to form immediately a circle facing outwards, and kneel down upon one knee, and level with their rifles or firelocks with fixed bayonets, in such manner that the muzzle of their pieces is directed upon the horses' noses; in this situation they may expect the attack of the cavalry with confidence, as by kneeling down the horsemen cannot cut at them with that ease as if standing, and such firmness will check him;—should, notwithstanding, the enemy make the attack, on taking care to fire only when the enemy is near, that well-directed fire and the defence of the bayonet gives still a great chance that he may be beaten off.

Q. 15. How are the flank patrols to conduct themselves on a night march?

A. By night they are not to march at a greater distance

distance than that they may always observe the main body, otherwise they may stray from it: they must stand still frequently, and listen, that they may not fall into an ambuscade; every thing extraordinary that is observed must be reported.

Q. 16. How is the flank patrol to act by night meeting an enemy?

A. They must fire immediately, and must rush upon them with the bayonet rather than retreat, to enable the main body to form, and to be prepared to receive him.

Q. 17. What is to be done perceiving single men?

A. Every exertion must be made to come near to them and take them prisoners.

Q. 18. Is nothing further to be observed by the flank patrols?

A. The patrol must march in the greatest silence—every body should be attentive—no talking allowed—no tobacco should be smoked, and every thing must be tight on the body, that no rattling may be heard.

CHAPTER IV.

Of the Patroles.

QUERY No. 1. As the first and third chapters have chiefly been confined to the duties of those patroles who serve for the security of a post or of a corps on a march, in this chapter it is intended to treat of such patroles as are detached at a great distance from the main body, and left to themselves to execute with prudence and courage what is demanded of them :——Of what use are, principally, patroles of this description ?

Answer. To get intelligence of the enemy, and to reconnoitre an extent of country.

Q. 2. Are those patroles generally of the same strength ?

A. No; according to circumstances they are in large or small numbers.

Q. 3. Why do the patroles sometimes consist only
of

of a few men, when by their weakness they are so much the more exposed to be taken by an enemy.

A. A strong patrol has certainly the power of resisting better than a small one, but if the country is known, the advantage is on the side of the small patrols, as they may pass with more ease, and have a better chance to approach near the enemy without being discovered.

N. B. Should an enemy invade England, and make their landing good; patrols of a few volunteers, commanded by an intelligent officer or non-commissioned officer, conversant with the country, would be more useful to gain intelligence than strong patrols.

Q. 4. By what rule is the patrol to be guided?

A. By the orders received for the service they are to perform, from which they should not deviate, as those patrols may be used for different services.

Q. 5. In what manner is such a patrol to be divided, commanded by a non-commissioned officer and consisting of twelve or sixteen men?

A. The division is nearly the same as that of an advanced guard, No. 5, Chapter II.

Q. 6. At what distance are the skirmishers to march in front and on the flanks?

A. Between 200 and 300 paces, but in some instances small patrols, to prevent their being so easily discovered, march without skirmishers or flank men, which circumstance must be left to the judgment of the commander of the same.

Q. 7. What is to be observed by the skirmishers?

A. They must be constantly on the look-out, and examine all covered places, through which one man must pass before he is followed by his comrades. In passing through villages, large farms, woods, bridges and hollow roads, they must observe the same prudential conduct as has been prescribed to the advanced guard: if they meet country people they must be examined, and even detained. The non-commissioned officer must not lose sight that such patrol is intrusted to him, and being at a distance from the main body he cannot expect any assistance, as is the case of an advanced guard or flank patrol; and that he must execute what is demanded of him with care; he must

must notice every occurrence, that he may make a proper report on his return.

Q. 8. A non-commissioned officer being sent on patrol to gain intelligence of the enemy, what enquiries is he principally to make of the country people ?

A. He should put the following questions :—
 1st, What news of the enemy ? 2d, Where is his encampment or where are his cantonments, where are his advanced posts ? 3d, What is his strength ? 4th, Is his strength in cavalry or infantry ? 5th, What sort of troops, are they hussars, chasseurs, infantry, light infantry, grenadiers, riflemen, artillery ? 6th, Have they cannon and how many ? 7th, What is the name of the general who commands them ? 8th, What is the name and rank of the commanding officer on the advanced posts ? 9th, Are frequent patrols sent out ? 10th, What is in general the strength of each patrol ? 11th, Do they come frequently, and how often in these quarters or this country ? 12th, When you pass the advanced posts do they examine you very strictly, and are they very alert, or do they lie much near the fire and sleep ? 13th, Are all the roads and passes so guarded that there is no possi-

bility to penetrate between the centinels ? 14th, Do the patroles of the enemy that are in your vicinity get into your houses and eat and drink ? 15th, Is good discipline kept amongst them, or are the men allowed to take what they like ; do they maraude or plunder ?

N. B. These questions should be made also immediately on taking an enemy prisoner, and his answers written down. Should more than one be taken, they should be questioned separately.

Q. 9. How is the patrole to act on meeting travellers ?

A. They must be examined as any other person ; should they go the same road the patrole is going, they must be kept back, and told in a civil manner that they cannot proceed ; should they make the plea of a passport and get saucy, they are to be told that they must not go on, and two men left to guard them for sometime (or should the patrole intend to return by the same road, until it returns) ; they may be permitted to enter into a house, if any is near, but kept under the guard of the two men.

Q. 10.

Q. 10. How is the patrole to act meeting an officer of the enemy with a trumpeter ?

A. If he is discovered, and it is supposed that he has not perceived the patrole (who may hide themselves, in that case,) he is suffered to pass : if this cannot be effected, he must be questioned where he is going and to whom, and two men are given to conduct him to the advanced post ; the two given as an escort must be trusty men, upon whom every dependance can be made that they do not enter into conversation, which is frequently attempted by such officer.

Q. 11. What is to be done should the patrole meet with somebody giving important intelligence of the enemy ?

A. Such man should be immediately sent under the care of two men to the commanding officer ?

Q. 12. In what manner is the truth to be obtained from the country people upon the information that the enemy has occupied their village or place of habitation ?

A. The truth must be obtained by good words, or by threatening, if necessary ; they must be told, that they are to be kept to ascertain the truth of

what they say, and should it prove to be a false report, that they will be taken to head quarters and punished.

Q. 13. What can induce country people to give false intelligence?

A. Because they wish to keep off the parties from their place of habitation, for fear of being robbed or plundered, which fear can only be removed by keeping up the strictest discipline.

Q. 14. What is the conduct to be pursued by the non-commissioned officer, finding that the country people persist in saying their village is occupied by the enemy, to ascertain the truth?

A. He forms a hidden post near the place said to be occupied, and causes a few men to approach the village, with the person who has given the intelligence, to observe and ascertain the fact.

Q. 15. Is a patrol permitted to enter into a house, farm, or inn, on their road?

A. By no means, as they may be discovered or betrayed to the enemy, and taken prisoners.

Q. 16.

Q. 16. Is it not better to avoid the villages and houses, and pass outwards and at a distance of them ?

A. Certainly.

Q. 17. Is it possible to avoid them at all times ?

A. No ; as frequently rivers, boggs, or marshes, prevent passing by them.

Q. 18. In what manner are the patrols to march, to accomplish, with certainty, the end for which they are sent out, and not to risk being taken ?

A. They must try to pass over the highest and most covered ground, always observing and watching the roads, as by doing so, they will discover the enemy sooner, and have time to take measures of concealment, attack, defence, or retreat, according to circumstances.

In England, in most of the maritime counties, a patrol may advance undiscovered upon an enemy, with little or no danger of being made prisoner, by observing to creep, or advance with care, from hedge to hedge.

Q. 19. What is the conduct to be pursued, upon
D 5 observing

observing a party of the enemy at a distance, not superior in number to the patrole, and appearing unsupported ?

A. On discovering them at a distance, the patrole takes some concealed position, lets the body pass, and attacks them in their rear, which will almost insure their being defeated and taken.

Q. 20. What advantage is gained, by cutting off a small patrole of the enemy ?

A. It gives spirit and courage to our men, disheartens the enemy, makes him timorous and slow; it recommends the non-commissioned officer to notice, to reward, or promotion.

Q. 21. A patrole being sent out to gain intelligence of the enemy, what means should be used to get certain information ?

A. The patrole takes post in a hidden spot near the village, farm house, or mill, in which the enemy is supposed to be, and causes a few men, moving singly at certain intervals, to advance in the most concealed manner towards the place, and try to see some inhabitant to obtain the necessary information, the non-commissioned officer follows at a distance and makes the necessary enquiries.

Q. 22.

Q. 22. What is to be done to conceal the real strength from the inhabitants, and deceive them?

A. The non-commissioned officer acquaints them, in confidence, that a few hundred men are following to take up their quarters in the place; and should he not trust examining the man so near the place, he may tell him that General N. N. wants to speak with him, and take him back at some distance, where he may question him; but should he still distrust him, it will be proper to keep and guard him for some time.

Q. 23. The country being occupied by the enemy, what is to be done in such a case?

A. As soon as the enemy's posts are discovered, the patrol should retreat very slow, and in the most concealed manner, and whenever they find a covered spot halt, and examine if the enemy does not pursue.

Q. 24. The non-commissioned officer, with his patrol, coming suddenly upon a column of the enemy, in what manner is he to act?

A. In such a case, he should not come to the resolution to retreat in a hurry to report, (as generally

nerally is done that nothing is seen but troops) he must conceal himself as well as possible with his men, to ascertain to what place he directs his march, of what troops the column is composed, if it is only a detachment, or a large corps; all which can be discovered from a height, or from an elevated spot, or from the edge of a wood; having ascertained all this, he should send a trusty man to report what he has discovered, and continue to make his observations. Having made some new discoveries, he detaches a second man to report, and so on, according to circumstances, on finding that the enemy comes nearer; in that case he is to retreat in the most concealed manner, but he should never, if possible, lose sight of the enemy.

Q. 25. What is he to do, under the circumstances mentioned in the above answer, when he comes near the post from which he has been detached?

A. If the country is hilly, or intersected with hedges, ditches, mud or stone walls, bogs, or marshes, and the patrol having met with the enemy, has fortunately so far returned safe, and has executed all with diligence and judgement, he
may

may then take post and fire upon the enemy, and retreat, keeping up a constant firing. Should he find that troops are advancing to his support, he must keep his ground, and defend himself from behind some hedge or wall to the last, as the enemy, on finding an unexpected resistance, dares not advance with celerity, but is kept at bay, and will proceed with caution, fearing an ambuscade.

Q. 26. In what manner is a patrole to act being sent out to ascertain if the enemy is still in his former position ?

A. They creep as near as possible towards the enemy, and observe if the enemy's centinels are still posted near or on the same spot; having ascertained all this, they retreat as fast as possible, but with caution, to make their report.

Q. 27. What is to be done by a patrole sent out to look for the enemy and to ascertain his position, on finding the enemy advancing or retreating ?

A. They must advance on or near the high road by which they expect to meet the enemy, with the greatest caution, and make enquiries of every body they may meet, and not return until they

they have obtained certain intelligence or made some prisoners.

Q. 28. What conduct is to be pursued being sent out at night to look out for the enemy ?

A. Great care should be taken by night not to fall into an ambuscade, and to creep forwards in the greatest silence, until the fires of the enemy are perceived ; having discovered the same, they should advance so near as to be challenged by the centinels, upon which they retreat.

Q. 29. Is any thing more to be done to get further information of the enemy ?

A. They must try to get hold of some of the inhabitants in that vicinity, and take them to the commanding officer, as those people being from near the spot where the enemy is stationed, can give good information of the situation of the country, and may serve as guides.

Q. 30. What is to be done on observing a patrol of the enemy, who, on perceiving us, retreats suddenly ?

A. They must be followed with the greatest caution, as they may be sent out with a view to draw

draw us into an ambuscade, as it is to be conjectured if an enemy advances with caution and retreats with haste, that some *stratagem* is intended.

Q. 31. Meeting a patrolle of the enemy at night, what is to be done then ?

A. If the patrolle advances with caution, attention, and silence on the road, and listens frequently, and no noise is heard at a distance, in that case it is almost impossible that they can fall in unaware upon a patrolle of the enemy; but upon perceiving them they should hide themselves near the road, and let them pass, to ascertain their strength; finding they are only a few men, they should be followed and closed up from the rear, which may be done without danger, and they will perhaps be all taken without firing a shot; but on perceiving that the detachment of the enemy is much stronger, and that they are followed by a greater number, an attempt should be made to pass them again unnoticed, even by making a circuit, to get before them; which having accomplished, a secure position should be taken, and without challenge a volley fired upon them, by which they will be checked: such detachment is
probably

probably on the march to surprise some of our own posts.

Q. 32. What is to be done by a small patrol of infantry meeting cavalry which he cannot avoid, and must therefore be overtaken by them ?

A. The non-commissioned officer, being a cool resolute man, acts in such case as has been prescribed to the flank patrols, No. 14 of Chapter III. but the patrol being so far detached from the army as not to have the least chance of support, and as it is of the greatest importance to the army from which they have been sent out, to gain intelligence, that the whole party should not be made prisoners, in that case they are to disperse two and two, and run off, by which some have a chance to escape, and the commanding officer may be apprized of what has happened.

Q. 33. Is there no other means to escape the cavalry ?

A. Should a house or church be near, they must try to get into it; barricade the door and fire out of the windows; the enemy may be afraid that the firing may cause some support to advance,

advance, and therefore retreat ; but if the infantry patrolle is cautious, it will very seldom happen that they are surpris'd or expos'd to cavalry, as infantry is never sent out alone in an open country, and as in a close country there are plenty of resources to avoid them. Should they be taken, it must be the consequence of their own neglect.

Q. 34. A good non-commissioned officer being sent out to reconnoitre a country unknown to him, what has he in such case principally to attend to ?

A. 1st, He must constantly look to the right and left of the road what grounds are on both sides : 2d, Upon the state of the road, if up and down hill and steep, if the road is broad or narrow : 3d, Where he meets with a hollow road, he should pace it to ascertain its length and breadth : 4th, If the country is flat or hilly ; if woody ; if cultivated or barren ; if some good foot paths are near the main road leading over the hills, or through the bogs or marshes : 5th, If the road or path is not to be turned : 6th, What the length of the wood is ; if it is close or open : 7th, How the towns and villages are situated—if upon hills, heights, or in valleys : 8th, If the churches
in

in the same are surrounded by walls : 9th, If a country seat or large farm or farms are near it : 10th, If the church or seat, or farm is more elevated than the village : 11th, If the river or rivulet is deep, and of what breadth, if the banks are high or low : 12th, On which side the banks are the highest : 13th, If the banks are planted with hedges or bushes, and if trees are near them : 14th, If the borders and bottom of the river are muddy or hard : 15th, If marshy meadows are on the sides : 16th, If the river or rivulet by rain is apt to swell much : 17th, Where the bridges are, and how many in its vicinity ; if they are of wood or stone, what is their breadth and their length ; if there are no passes over it for foot passengers ; if there are fords in the vicinity : 18th, If bogs or moors are near it ; if roads or causeways are through the same ; if those bogs or moors are passable even in rainy weather.

Q. 35. Are the reports of the inhabitants always to be trusted ?

A. No ; not always.

Q. 36. What is to be done to ascertain the truth ?

A. If time and circumstances will admit, every thing

thing should be ascertained by himself, and should the non-commissioned officer have no time to inspect all, some inhabitants should be taken, and sent to the commanding officer, who may obtain from them the required information.

Q. 37. What is the non-commissioned officer to do on a patrol by day-light ?

A. Although the greatest silence is recommended to the patrols at night, the non-commissioned officer making a patrol by day should keep up a conversation with his men, when in an open country, upon the nature of the grounds they are passing through; instruct them in what manner to conduct themselves if on a patrol at night; what conspicuous places there are in the vicinity to retreat to, or go by at night; shew to the men the points of north, south, east, and west; the probable situation of the enemy, and the situation of our own army. So as to be able to approach the one undiscovered at night, or to retreat in a safe manner if attacked by a superior force; this should be the only subject of conversation with his men.

CHAPTER V.

Of Surprises.

QUERY No. 1. What is a surprise ?

Answer. To come upon an enemy who is negligent (either by stratagem or treachery) in such a manner that he is not able to get in a proper state of defence.

Q. 2. What time is generally chosen for surprises ?

A. Midnight or before day-light.

Q. 3. Why at those times ?

A. In the night men are apt to get timorous, and if asleep and suddenly awakened they think rather of saving their lives by flight than by defending themselves, and under such circumstances a few men may defeat a great number.

Q. 4. Is there no instance in which a surprise may be attempted in broad day ?

A. Yes, when there is a certainty of the enemy
being

being so negligent, that he confides in the daylight, and permits his officers to ride about and the men to maraude.

Q. 5. What arms are used in such circumstances ?

A. Only cut and thrust weapons, as firing would create alarm and lead to a discovery too soon, or procure support to the enemy: swords, bayonets, felling axes and hatchets are the proper weapons to use in a surprise.

Q. 6. Is any thing to be observed relative to the drefs ?

A. Whatever would be conspicuous at night must be taken off, or exchanged for some less bright.

Q. 7. In what manner at night in the fight is a friend to be known from an enemy ?

A. A certain word or number is given out, by which the party may know one another; whoever is challenged and does not answer the signal is treated as an enemy.

Q. 8. In what manner is it best to approach the enemy ?

A. Some

A. Some men are to creep as near as possible to the centinels ; if it is observed that they walk up and down, when they turn their backs one to creep on all fours near them, and keep laying quiet when they turn and come back, which method is pursued until approached so near as to be able to jump up, take them by the throat, and get hold of their arms to prevent them from firing and giving an alarm ; they should then be cautioned also not to call out, or that they will be instantly killed : to surprise the centinel, two daring resolute men are chosen, carrying only short broad swords or hangers.

Q. 9. Being master of the centinels, or having killed them, what is to be done then ?

A. The commander of the detachment who has followed singly the men sent out to surprise the centinels, finding they have succeeded in taking or killing them, hurries back to his party, which has followed him at the distance of 100 or 150 paces, and orders them in a low tone of voice to advance, and advances with velocity, but in the greatest silence, upon the post of the enemy, where the men probably are sitting quietly round the fire, or perhaps the greatest number are laying on the

the ground, and even some asleep; he surrounds them, makes them prisoners, or kills those who make opposition. Should the men occupy a house, which is frequently the case when in cantonments in winter, after being master of the sentinel, a dash is made on the guard room, possession taken of the arms, and the guard made prisoners.

Q. 10. But what is to be done should the sentinels be on their guard?

A. Those who are sent forward to secure the sentinels, on being discovered, may declare themselves deserters; and should the sentinel be imprudent enough to suffer them to advance, they seize an opportunity to fall upon him and secure him without noise.

Q. 11. What is to be done if the enemy's sentinels are alert and fire?

A. In that case the orders which have been given must be the guide for their further conduct. Should the plan be to take the picket either by stratagem or by force, and that perhaps another party has been sent out to turn the same and cut off their retreat, in that case the sentinel, having challenged

challenged and fired, is to be pursued immediately, and the post is to be attacked ; but should the centinels be alert and the post found prepared to receive the attack, the best and most prudent way is to fall back, and retreat in the greatest silence.

CHAPTER VI.

Of Ambuscades.

QUERY No. 1. What is an ambuscade ?

Answer. An ambuscade is formed by concealing a certain number of men in some place, in such a manner as to be able to attack a party of the enemy passing in its vicinity unexpectedly. For example, in a wood, or coppice, behind a hedge, in a ditch, in corn fields, under a bridge, in or behind buildings, being in the vicinity of the road by which the enemy must pass.

Q. 2. What is the principal view of an ambuscade ?

A. To make the country unsafe for the enemy, to cover and protect our own patrols and advanced posts, that the enemy may not venture to approach them ; sometimes with a view to make prisoners, that the commander may obtain intelligence of the enemy ; and also, if in expectation of being attacked by an enemy, to procure infor-

mation in time of his advancing, and to detain him in his march.

Q. 3. At what distance from the advanced posts are those ambuscades generally placed ?

A. Not above 800 or 1000 paces.

Q. Why at such and not at a greater distance ?

A. Because so small a party, on being discovered by the enemy, may retreat and escape, or may be supported.

Q. 5. What conduct is to be pursued towards people passing near to it ?

A. Those passengers by whom one is certain of not having been perceived, should be suffered to pass; but all those who may be suspected of having discovered any thing, should be detained and made prisoners.

Q. 6. What is further to be observed in an ambuscade ?

A. The greatest silence should be observed; nobody suffered to sleep; bread and water should be taken along with the party.

Q 7.

Q. 7. Which is the best manner to form an ambuscade ?

A. If the country permits it, the best manner is to divide the party in two, to attack the enemy in front and rear : the first party being the nearest to the enemy suffers him to pass, and does not appear until the moment when the other party attacks the enemy in front.

Q. 8. At what distance are those two parties to be placed in the ambuscade ?

A. According to circumstances, and if the country permits it, from twenty to thirty or sixty paces distance, but not further, to enable both parties, should the enemy make an opposition, to take to flight, or to support one another.

Q. 9. In what manner should they act if the patrol of the enemy is of cavalry, or that the party consists of officers going with an escort to reconnoitre ?

A. The first party of the ambuscade suffers the enemy to pass ; the other party, who is to attack him in front, suffers him to advance so near, that he cannot miss his aim when he fires : upon

levelling on the enemy he should be called to—*Dismount, or we shall fire, you are cut off.* Should the enemy, by this sudden surprise, dismount, the party in its rear advances—surrounds the enemy with loud cries to increase their fears—disarms them—links the horses—and retreats in the most concealed and speedy manner. Should the enemy take to flight, the horses should be fired at, to make the men prisoners. Whatever may be the success it is advisable, having been obliged to fire, to retreat as fast as possible, as another party may be near: if the whole party lies in one ambuscade, it may suffer the enemy to pass towards our advanced posts, and attack him on his return, when perhaps he is the least on his guard.

and gets very soon in confusion, by which means he is taken or defeated with ease.

Q. 10. What is to be done on perceiving that the enemy is advancing with caution, and examines every hidden spot on the right and left of the road, by which there appears a certainty of being discovered?

A. If the party of the enemy is so strong that you are not able to cope with it, the best is to retreat in the most concealed manner; but if the
country

country is so situated, that you cannot retreat without being perceived by the enemy, in that case you may venture to fire upon him ; by which means he may be brought to a stand, and an opportunity obtained to retreat, as by this bold measure he may suppose that a still stronger party lies concealed near it.

Q. 11. How are the men in an ambuscade to act on perceiving a large body of the enemy, even a column, on the march ?

A. All depends on the orders which have been given ; if ordered to lay in ambuscade where the enemy is expected by the general, in that case something should be ventured, and on the enemy being so situated that the fire may be of some effect, fire should be given and a retreat attempted, by which means the enemy may be detained, the posts alarmed, and the men have a good chance of escaping.

CHAPTER VII.

Of Incurfions or Inroads.

QUERY No. 1. What is an incurfion or inroad?

Answer. It is called an incurfion, when a detachment is fent out in a country belonging to the enemy, or occupied by him, with directions to turn his flanks, or fall upon his rear, and to do him as much mischief as poffible, or to take couriers, generals, or other perfons of confequence; to deftroy magazines, depôts of forage or ammunition, take or deftroy baggage, &c. thofe detachments may be very ftrong or fmall, according to circumftances.

Q. 2. Small detachments, commanded by a non-commissioned officer, being fent out, how are they compofed?

A. Generally of dragoons, huffars, or light dragoons, riflemen, mounted or difmounted, or light infantry.

Q. 3.

Q. 3. Is not heavy cavalry, or infantry of the line, employed sometimes on this service?

A. Yes, as light troops cannot be always at hand, the heavy cavalry or infantry of the line, is obliged frequently to do the same duty.

Q. 4. Which of the two corps, cavalry or infantry, is the most advantageous to employ on this service?

A. The cavalry has great advantages over the infantry, as they can move quicker, but the infantry possesses the advantage of having only to provide for themselves, and may pass through all countries, mountains, woods, and bogs.

Q. 5. What knowledge is required in a non-commissioned officer, having such a command?

A. A thorough knowledge of the country, without which he will be obliged to make constant enquiries, and be exposed to be betrayed or deceived; he must be courageous and cool, and be able to overcome unexpected difficulties. Having such command in our own country, has many advantages which do not exist in an enemy's country.

Q. 6.

Q. 6. In what manner are provisions to be obtained, when at a distance from the main army?

A. On going out, the men should be provided with four or five days bread and meat, that they may not be obliged to look out for victuals; when these are consumed, the party must proceed to some village or farm house off the road intended to be pursued, and provisions must be provided, having previously taken the necessary precautions, that no enemy is in the place or farm house. To deceive the inhabitants, the party may give out that they are the advanced guard of a large corps on their march; if any of the party has friends or relations in the vicinity, in whom confidence may be placed, those men should be sent there at night to obtain information concerning the enemy.

This being accomplished, the road on which it is intended to march towards the enemy, should be taken, but avoid going to direct to it.

Q. 7. What is to be done on the march?

A. The high roads should be avoided by day, the march should be made by night only, and the party should never remain more than twelve hours in one spot. By day, such concealed position should

should be taken, as to be able to observe the main road leading from one post, or from one place, occupied by the enemy, to another; couriers, officers, or orderly men being discovered, the same methods are to be pursued, as pointed out in Chapter VI. No. 9. of the ambuscades; they should be surrounded and made prisoners without noise, and as soon as the expedition has succeeded, the country should be left; if a messenger is taken, his letters and papers should be taken immediately from him, and conveyed in the most safe and expeditious manner to the commanding general, as they may be of great importance; a general, or some officer of rank being taken, should be con-

veyed to the nearest post of the army, to be forwarded under an escort to head quarters. Such party should not make single officers or soldiers prisoners, but should suffer them to pass, if they are certain of not having been perceived by them, as by such capture, one of much greater consequence may be lost.

Q. 8. But how is it possible to gain the rear of the enemy's army, if the rear and flanks are covered by the sea coast?

A. It is certainly difficult, if not impossible, if the
the

the enemy is vigilant on his flanks, to come on his rear, but it may still be executed in England, by taking advantage, in a dark night, of the tide, embarking from some place not occupied by him, and by landing in his rear do him some mischief, and then re-embark. Infantry, particularly light infantry, or riflemen, are the only troops to be employed on such service.

CHAPTER VIII.

Of the Rear Guard.

QUERY No. 1. What is a rear guard?

Answer. A rear guard is a body of troops which, when a corps or army retreats, marches the last, and is of course the nearest to the enemy, whom it is to observe and keep back.

Q. 2. In what manner are the men divided?

A. In the same manner as the advanced guard, with the only difference, that their skirmishers are in their rear and flanks, and are constantly looking behind and side ways, that the enemy may not fall unawares upon them.

Q. 3. At what distance is a rear guard of twelve or sixteen men, commanded by a non-commissioned officer, to keep in the rear of the detachment which is immediately before him?

A. Not above the distance of fifty or sixty paces,

paces, the skirmishers must keep nearly at the same distance in the rear of him, that those few men may not be cut off, should the enemy be close in his pursuit. Should the enemy follow or pursue at a great distance, in such case, the skirmishers may keep *farther off*, particularly in a country with elevated spots, from which the enemy may be perceived at a great distance. Every thing seen should be reported to the noncommissioned officer, and by him to the officer nearest to him, as has been detailed in the chapter of the advanced guard.

Q. 4. In what manner is the rear guard to retreat, being attacked by the enemy?

A. The men are to be divided into small parties of *two* and *two*, forming a kind of half circle, and in this manner, making a continual and well-directed fire, they retreat alternately, by which two half circles are formed supporting each other; as soon as the first circle has fired, the men run back to such distance as to give time to load and support the others, who are standing still until the half circle in the rear is loaded; in this manner the retreat is accomplished, in an enclosed country, from hedge to hedge, or from wall to wall, in a
wood.

wood, from tree to tree, and in a village, from house to house ; the four men who are on the flanks of the two lines, should be very attentive that the enemy does not turn their flanks.

Q. 5. In what manner is the retreat performed and covered, over hills ?

A. The skirmishers should always try to keep the heights, to protect those who are marching on the road ; should any rocks be in their way, they should try to scramble over them, to cover always those on the lower roads, and be able to see if the enemy pursues, and in what number.

Q. 6. In what manner is the retreat performed over a causeway, bridge, or defile ?

A. As soon as the party has approached within about 100 paces distance of such place, they are to run through the pass, causeway, or over the bridge, and form to protect the retreat of the skirmishers, as in such case the enemy generally pursues, and pushes on with vigor and velocity.

F I N I S.

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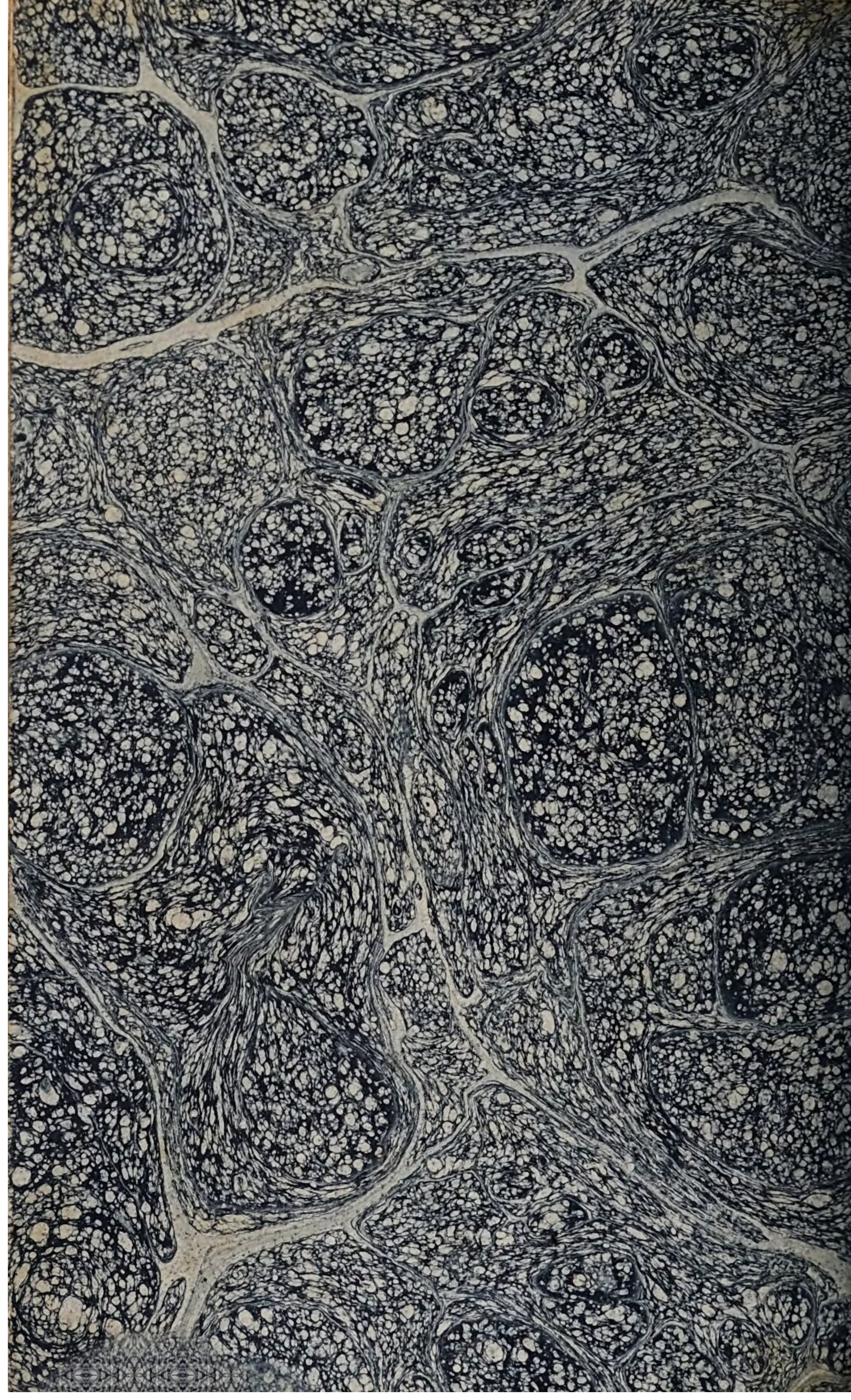
Q. In what manner is the ... performed
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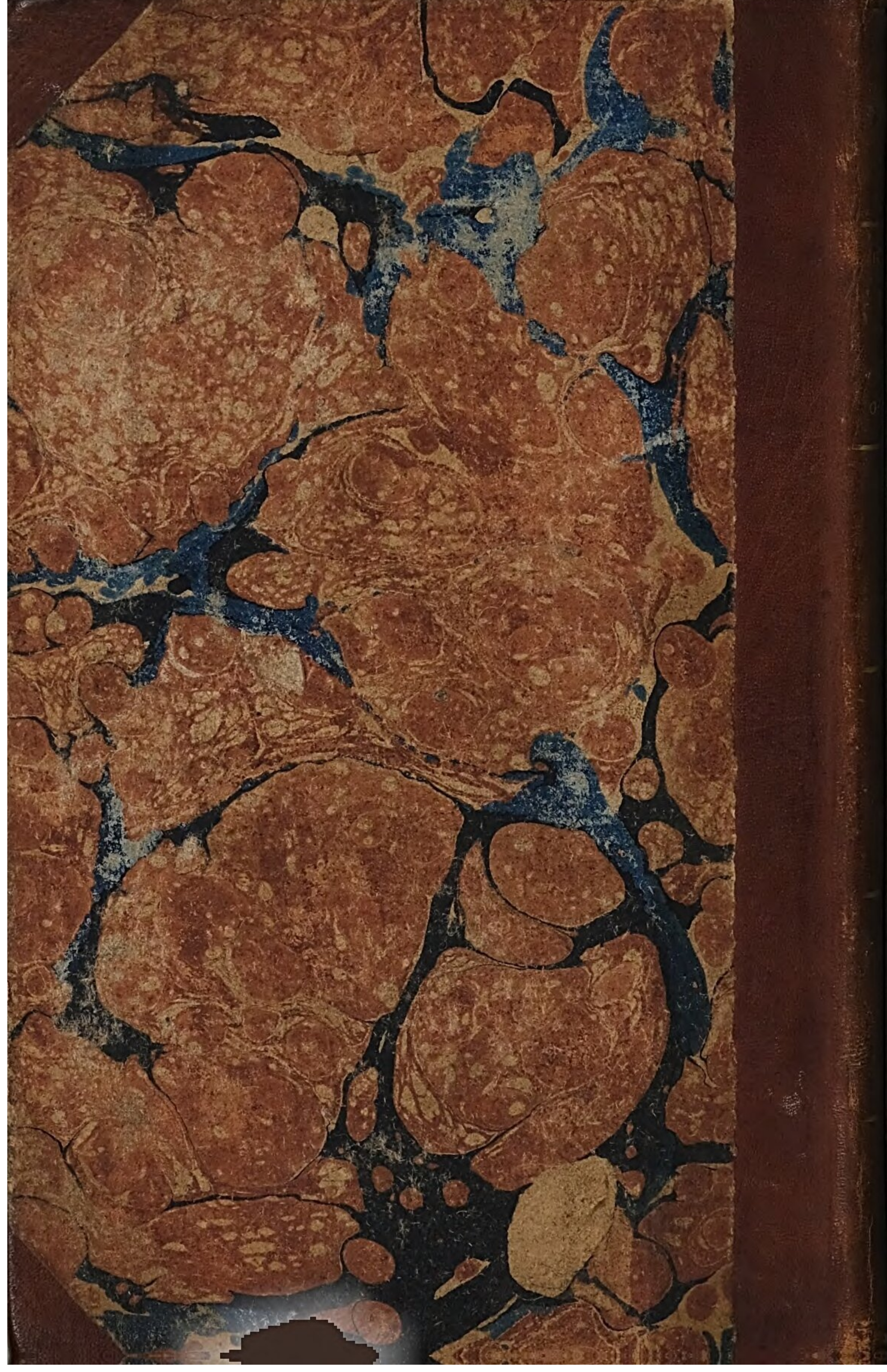
Q. In what manner is the ... performed
over a ...?

A. As soon as the party has ...
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W. L. H. 1871







Sontag, John,

Hints for non-commissioned officers on actual service comp. and transl. by
Colonel Sontag

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